

SEE YOUR DOCTOR

New Survey Finds Women With Depression Say It's A Leading Barrier To Workplace Success, Yet Many Go Undiagnosed

(NAPSA)—A new survey found that leaving work early, not returning from lunch, and avoiding contact with coworkers are all behaviors of depressed working women. Despite the fact that 83 percent of the depressed working women surveyed perceived depression as the number-one barrier to success for women in the workplace, 40 percent of them go undiagnosed.

"It is of paramount importance that we work together to destigmatize depression and to ensure that people living with depression seek appropriate help. To face depression without appropriate supports, such as psychotherapy and medication, is to risk suffering longer and more intensely than necessary," said Lynn C. Epstein, M.D., president, American Medical Women's Association. "Instead, we want to encourage women to get the help they need to virtually eliminate their emotional and physical symptoms and to regain their sense of well-being. Once this is achieved, women can get back to being themselves, and are likely to regain their prior performance level at work."

An estimated 5 million American working women suffer from depression. According to the survey, women who receive treatment for their depression, especially medication, experience significant benefits. In fact, after being treated, 97 percent of women taking medication reported regaining their previous level of work productivity and reestablishing past relationships with coworkers. Ninety-five percent reported the ability to feel good again and a renewed interest in work.

On the other hand, the impact of depression for working women

who don't find treatment is considerable. The survey found that 89 percent of women who quit or lost their job while suffering from depression attribute the loss to their condition, and nearly one-third of respondents said their depression "completely interferes" with their ability to do their job. Additionally, the survey reported that depressed working women tend to be more quiet in the office, are unmotivated, and are more prone to make mistakes.

Depression affects approximately 19 million American adults each year and interferes with the ability to work, sleep, eat, study, and enjoy once pleasurable activities. Symptoms of depression may be emotional, such as restlessness and loss of pleasure, and/or physical, such as headache and vague aches and pains.

The "Depression Among Women in the Workplace" survey was sponsored by the American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) and the National Mental Health Association (NMHA), and funded by Wyeth Pharmaceuticals. The initiative was created to raise awareness about the impact that untreated depression has on the workplace and to encourage those who suffer from the condition to seek treatment that will help them reach virtual elimination of symptoms. "Career GOAL!: Overcoming Depression in the Workplace" is an extension of the GOAL! (Go On And Live!) campaign, a national depression awareness campaign launched in April 2002.

For more information about depression or the GOAL! campaign, visit www.GoOnAndLive.com or call toll free at 1-888-830-GOAL for a free brochure.

Survey Highlights of "Depression Among Women in the Workplace"

Working women perceive depression as a leading barrier to success in the workplace.

- Depression was perceived as the number-one career obstacle by 83 percent of surveyed depressed working women.
- Sixty-two percent of working women not yet diagnosed agree that depression is a leading perceived barrier to success in the office.

Employed women suffering from depression benefit from treatment and medication.

- Between 94 and 99 percent of women taking medication credit relief of symptoms for improvements at work.
- Women who have virtually eliminated their symptoms of depression describe themselves as regaining their self-confidence and resuming interest in their own growth.

Depressed working women don't seek treatment quickly.

- Only 47 percent of women diagnosed with depression seek help right away.
- Forty percent of working women with depressive symptoms remain undiagnosed.

Depression impacts absenteeism, turnover, and productivity in the workplace.

- Absenteeism among depressed women averages 10.6 days per year compared to 5 days per year among working women in general.
- Thirty percent of working women suffering from depression either quit or lose a job.